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1859 - Report to the California Surveyor General from George Hale, Monterey County Assessor

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Turkeys.....	100
Ducks.....	150
Geese.....	500
Cattle slaughtered.....	624	\$15,600
Hogs slaughtered.....	500	5,000
Sheep slaughtered.....	400	1,600

IMPROVEMENTS.

Three steam grist mills, with six run of stone, and of eighty-seven horse power, valued at eighteen thousand dollars; six water-power grist mills, having ten run of stone, and seventy horse power, valued at thirty-five thousand dollars; grain ground, one hundred and fifty thousand bushels. Saw Mills – Steam power, three, water power, eight; lumber sawed annually, ten million feet. Quartz mills, two. Mining ditches, two; miles in length, two. Turnpike roads, miles in length, fifteen; cost, fourteen thousand dollars; income, one thousand two hundred dollars; cost of repairs, three hundred dollars.

Should anything further come to our knowledge, concerning any matters required of us by your circular, I will give it to you at the earliest opportunity. The foregoing is as correct as was possible for us to obtain under the circumstances.

Yours, etc.,

JOHN BURTON,
Assessor of Mendocino County.

MONTEREY COUNTY.

GEORGE HALE.....County Assessor.

Hon. H. A. HIGLEY,
State Surveyor-General, California:

SIR: - The following is the Statistical Report of the county of Monterey for the year 1859. There are some items of interest to be obtained in this county, which I found could not be fully reported at an earlier date, which must be my excuse for not sending you my report sooner:

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS, ETC.

Description.	No.
Lands Cultivated, acres.....	10,900
Wheat, acres.....	1,819
Wheat, bushels.....	72,760
Barley, acres.....	1,687
Barley, bushels.....	49,510
Oats, acres.....	147
Oats, bushels.....	8,820
Corn, acres.....	190
Corn, bushels.....	1,900
Buckwheat, acres.....	41
Buckwheat, bushels.....	410
Potatoes, acres.....	426
Potatoes, bushels.....	85,200
Sweet Potatoes, acres.....	14
Sweet Potatoes, bushels.....	1,050
Onions, acres.....	50
Onions, bushels.....	5,000
Peas, acres.....	285
Peas, bushels.....	2,850
Beans, acres.....	309
Beans, bushels.....	9,270
Hay, acres.....	2,849
Hay, tuns.....	2,849
Apple Trees.....	1,340
Cherry.....	191
Plum.....	231
Peach.....	1,075
Apricot.....	50
Quince.....	25
Pear.....	1,340
Fig.....	35
Almond.....	40
Walnut.....	20
Nectarine.....	10
Grape Vines.....	60,000
Butter, per annum, lbs.....	29,790
Eggs, per annum, doz.....	10,995
Cheese, per annum, lbs.....	21,600

LIVE STOCK, ETC.

Description.	No.
Oxen, American.....	134
Oxen, Spanish.....	403
Cows, American.....	1,474
Cows, Spanish, (tame).....	2,760
Cows, half-breeds.....	420
Calves.....	4,125
Stock Cattle, American.....	1,258
Stock Cattle, Spanish.....	44,043
Stock Cattle, half-breed.....	1,487
Horses, American.....	303
Horses, Spanish, (tame).....	2,820
Horses, half-breeds.....	260
Horses, wild, Spanish.....	3,854
Colts.....	2,191
Mules.....	268
Asses.....	50
Hogs.....	2,585
Sheep.....	94,394
Goats.....	617
Chickens.....	7,576
Turkeys.....	500
Ducks.....	268
Geese.....	140

IMPROVEMENTS, ETC.

Description.	No.	Value.
Saw-Mill.....	1	.....
Steam Power.....	1	.....
Lumber sawed per 24 hours, feet.....	30,000	.....
Cost.....	.....	\$15,000
Ferry.....	1	.....
Cost.....	.....	500
Real Estate.....	.....	404,975
Improvements on Real Estate.....	.....	104,937
Personal Property.....	.....	901,105
Total.....	.....	\$1,421,017

FARMING.

The principal farming operations of this county are confined to the lands in the Pajaro Valley and Salinas Plains. What lands have been cultivated the last season have produced extraordinary well. The want of a market, however, for the surplus produce has been a great drawback to the prosperity of those who have given their whole attention to farming. The estimate of the agricultural products of this county is calculated to show the amount gathered, but, if our farmers were sure of a market for all they could raise, the quantity could be doubled. In some of our favorable localities the grain has not been allowed to mature, it being cut early in the season as hay for cattle, and, in many instances, the farmers have allowed their crops to stand unharvested, turning their hogs into the field to fatten upon the grain.

The question is now, what shall we do with the surplus produce? When we take into consideration the capabilities of the soil of California to produce in abundance all that man requires, it is certainly a matter for deep reflection for our people, and which should seriously engage the attention of every person having the welfare of California at heart. By a close attention to our home wants and a just appreciation of the capabilities of our soil, who can doubt our prosperity? It is a matter of pride to the reflecting mind to contemplate our future greatness, and we of the agricultural counties look forward with bright hopes to the time when a system of railroads shall penetrate our beautiful vallies, enabling us to reach our citizens in less favored localities by quick and cheap travel, and at less cost of freight, disseminate the blessings of agriculture at prices cheap to the consumer and remunerative to the farmer.

CATTLE AND PASTURAGE.

This county is essentially a pasture county, producing the very best of the indigenous grasses of California, being the wild oat, bunch grass, alfillaria (pin grass), the bur, and a large variety of other clovers, in addition to many small but nutritious grasses. The seeds from the pin grass lying on the ground is very fattening food until the rains commence. Horned cattle and horses thrive well and grow large. In many localities, however, owing to the want of rains for the last few years, there has been a great falling off of pasturage, notwithstanding the cattle of this county have done remarkably well and command good prices.

FRUIT TREES AND VINES.

Considerable progress has been made the last year in fruit-growing in this county; most of our citizens who are permanently located have planted many varieties of fruit trees, which, as a general thing, do well. The old Mission orchards, heretofore the only source from which the people of this county obtained a supply, are fast decaying, and unless measures can be taken to improve the quality of the fruit, the demand for it ere long will be very limited.

Our prolific soil and the progress of horticulture by our people must soon produce a quality of fruit not to be excelled in any country. The orchard at San Juan has produced this year about one thousand five hundred quintals of fruit (apples and pears). At the "Camello" there are about forty pear trees. At San Antonio, in the southern part

of the county, much attention has been given to the fruit trees and vines; also, at the "Soledad" some beautiful gardens have been laid out, where the grape is cultivated with marked success. Near San Juan some fine fruit has been raised the past year. Experiments have also been made in wine-making, with good success. The wine produced this season will be about five hundred gallons. Excepting the Mission orchards the fruit trees in this county are young, and the yield of fruit necessarily small.

SHEEP AND WOOL.

The wool clip of this county amounts to about three hundred and seventy thousand pounds, generally of a superior quality. I think I hazard nothing in saying that this county possesses superior advantages over any other in the State for sheep raising; in fact, sheep are fast becoming favorites with our people. The climate and feed being so well suited to the growth of both wool and mutton, the former rather improving than deteriorating, both in quantity and quality, the increase on imported sheep, as a general thing, grows much larger than the parent stock, even in localities near the sea coast, where the heavy fogs prevail, which is somewhat detrimental to their growth, but in more favorable localities their improvement is surprising.

In carefully attended flocks of ewes the increase is from ninety to one hundred and ten per cent. annually. Very little of any disease has attended the sheep in this county; the hills affording pasture for the time the valley lands are dried up, keeping the flocks in a healthy condition.

It may not be out of place to mention here some extraordinary yields of wool in what would be considered an unfavorable locality. Six sheep, weighing, in the aggregate, one thousand two hundred and twelve pounds, produced one fleece each, the aggregate weight was one hundred and thirty-two and one-quarter pounds. The largest fleece that has yet been produced in this county weighed forty-two and one-half pounds, of a superior Merino.

WHALE FISHERIES.

There are at Monterey two whaling companies; one consisting of sixteen Portuguese, who have two boats with crews of six men each, the other company are Americans and Portuguese, they also have two boats with crews of six men each. The catch for the last year, ending, say, the first November, 1859, was one thousand eight hundred barrels, of which six hundred barrels were California Gray whale oil, and the balance humpback whale, except one right whale.

The humpback whales average about thirty-three barrels each; the California Gray about twenty-five barrels each. The whales after being killed are towed into the harbor and cut up on the beach; the carcass is rolled over with heavy tackles and the blubber cut off with the whaleman's spades, as is usually done in whaling, and then carried up the bank on hand-barrows to the try-pots on shore.

The fattest whale caught this season made ninety barrels of oil.

Average value of oil in San Francisco market is 38 cents per gallon.....	38
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Average cost of Casks per gallon, delivered at Monterey...	5
Freight upon Oil, per gallon.....	2
Gaging and Commission.....	2	.....
		9
Net proceeds of Oil per gallon.....	.....	29

At the past year's rates the business pays about forty dollars per month to the hand, although the men are engaged actually but from the middle of February to the middle of April in catching the California Gray, and from the first of August until the last of November for humpbacks.

SAW MILL, WOOD, LUMBER, ETC.

One saw mill in this county, situated on the Point Pinos Ranch, near the city of Monterey; steam power, and cuts thirty thousand feet of lumber per twenty-four hours. The lumber is a superior quality of pine; it is used principally for street planking, bridges, etc. For all purposes where toughness and durability are essential it is said to be the most suitable lumber in the California market. The proprietor has made considerable alteration and improvement in the mill during the last year, in order to meet the increasing demands for the lumber.

There is also at Monterey a brisk trade carried on in the cord-wood business. The exports for the year will reach nearly fifteen thousand cords of pine wood.

A fine schooner, of one hundred and twenty-five tuns burden, is being built for the city of Monterey; an evidence of the adaptability of the timber, in that section of the county, for many useful purposes.

FERRY AND BRIDGE.

There is one ferry in this county, crossing the Pajaro on the line of travel from San Juan Town to Gilroy. It is being superceded by a permanent bridge, which is nearly completed, and will cost about four thousand dollars.

TELEGRAPH.

The Pacific and Atlantic Telegraph Company have extended their line to the town of San Juan, making a distance of six miles of telegraphy line within this county.

ARTESIAN WELLS.

One artesian well in this county. Several attempts have been made in different parts of this county to procure water by boring the artesian well, but has not been as successful as could be desired. Many of our citizens procure water from the surface spring by the aid of the windmill, which seems to answer every purpose, at less expense, and a greater certainty of a regular supply.

Hoping this may meet your approval, the same is most respectfully submitted.

I have the honor to be,
Yours, very respectfully,

GEORGE HALE,
Ex-County Assessor of Monterey County.

NEVADA COUNTY.

MARTIN BRENNAN.....County Assessor.

NEVADA, December 12th, 1859.

H. A. HIGLEY,
Surveyor-General:

SIR: - As a part of my official duty, I herewith transmit to you my annual report, as County Assessor for Nevada County, for the current year.

By reference to my report, for the year 1858, it will be observed, that the county was divided into three separate parts or portions, representing respectively the Agricultural, the Grazing, and the Mineral interest of the county, and minute descriptions given to the location boundaries, and estimated extent and resources of each division.

Without entering into the descriptive detail of my report for 1858, in this respect, I will pursue the same classification, remarking first upon the agricultural and grazing divisions of the county, containing an estimated area, in the aggregate, of about four hundred and thirty-four square miles, of which is located for agriculture about forty thousand acres, and for the purposes of grazing about one hundred and thirty thousand acres, with an estimated value in the aggregate for improvements, of two hundred and sixty thousand dollars.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS, ETC.

Upon the lands located for the purposes of agriculture, is raised nine hundred and fifty-seven acres of wheat, yielding an average of twenty-five bushels per acre; twenty-seven hundred acres of barley, and fifteen hundred acres of oats, yielding thirty bushels per acre; five hundred acres of potatoes, and about five thousand acres of grass or meadow land.

FRUIT TREES, ETC.

Of Fruit trees, the number is estimated as follows: